

**City of Culver City, California
Agenda Item Report**

.Meeting Date: 02/09/2015		Item Number: <u>A-1</u>	
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM: Adoption of a Resolution Calling a Public Hearing for February 23, 2015 to Determine Whether the Public Health, Safety or Welfare Requires the Formation of Underground Utility District 11 Located along Culver Boulevard between Sepulveda Boulevard and Commonwealth Avenue.			
Contact Person/Dept.: Mate Gaspar/Public Works		Phone Number: (310) 253-5602	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☐ Attachments: ☒	
Commission Action Required: Yes ☐ No ☒		Date: _____	
Public Notification: (E-Mail) Agenda and Meetings – City Council (02/04/15)			
Department Approval: Charles D. Herbertson (01/30/15)		City Attorney Approval: Carol Schwab (by H. Baker) (02/02/15)	
Chief Financial Officer Approval: Jeff Muir (by M. Noller) (02/02/15)		City Manager Approval: John M. Nachbar (02/03/15)	
<u>RECOMMENDATION:</u> Staff recommends the City Council call a public hearing for February 23, 2015 to determine whether the public health, safety or welfare requires the formation of Underground Utility District 11 located along Culver Boulevard between Sepulveda Boulevard and Commonwealth Avenue. <u>BACKGROUND:</u> Per California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Tariff Rule 20A, Replacement of Overhead with Underground Electric Facilities, Culver City is allocated a certain amount of funding every year which is derived from Southern California Edison (SCE) ratepayers and set aside exclusively for utility underground projects. This year, the amount allocated to Culver City is \$196,659, and the total allocation balance including previous years is \$542,556. In addition, the CPUC allows local governments to “spend ahead” up to five years of Rule 20A allocations. With a significant amount of funding now available for a project, staff has met with representatives of SCE to discuss potential undergrounding projects and to determine the scope of work and associated costs. On January 12, 2015, the City Council discussed various locations for undergrounding and directed the City Manager to proceed with the underground utility district formation process for a project at and near Culver Boulevard and Sepulveda Boulevard.			

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DISCUSSION:

This location is a major transportation gateway into Culver City. In 2009, Caltrans completed the construction of a new off-ramp from the 405 freeway to Culver Boulevard. In addition, Caltrans realigned Culver Boulevard from Sawtelle Boulevard to Commonwealth Avenue in order to improve traffic operations. With the City's proposed capital project to realign Culver Boulevard from Commonwealth Avenue to Elenda Street in 2016, an undergrounding project at the westerly end would be a complimentary aesthetic improvement that would reduce the large number of overhead wires in the area (The transmission lines and poles would remain as they are prohibitively costly to underground. The transmission lines are located at the highest part of the pole).

To formally initiate the formation process, SCE requires the City Council adopt a resolution that, among other things, requires other utilities on the poles to underground their facilities at their cost. Rule 20A funds can only be used to underground SCE facilities.

Culver City Municipal Code Section 5.04 details the procedures for formation of an underground utility district, removal of overhead utility facilities, and installation of underground facilities. Since 1968, 10 Underground Utility Districts (UUD) have been formed in the City. The most recent UUD was formed in 2007 for the undergrounding of transmission poles along the closed section of Exposition Boulevard between Venice Boulevard and Washington Boulevard and a portion of National Boulevard between Washington Boulevard and Wesley Street.

Should the City Council adopt the proposed resolution, all affected utilities and property owners within 500 feet of the UUD site will be notified of the public hearing.

FISCAL ANALYSIS:

In order to fund any project, SCE will use both Rule 20A funds that are currently accumulated as well as borrow ahead five years from future Rule 20A fund allocations for Culver City as allowed by CPUC regulations. The estimated total amount available for borrowing ahead five (5) years is \$1 million. Adding the accumulated previous years' allocations of \$542,556, a total of approximately \$1.5 million is available for the proposed project which is the estimated cost of the proposed project. No City funds will be required, either for construction or future maintenance.

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ATTACHMENTS:

1. Map showing the utility poles from which existing wires will be undergrounded between on Culver Boulevard between Sepulveda Boulevard and Commonwealth Avenue
2. Proposed Resolution

MOTION:

That the City Council:

Adopt a resolution calling a public hearing for February 23, 2015 to determine whether the public health, safety or welfare requires the formation of Underground Utility District 11 located along Culver Boulevard between Sepulveda Boulevard and Commonwealth Avenue.